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Britania Expirans

OR, A BRIEF

MEMORIAL

O F

COMMERCE

Humbly Offer'd to the

Parliament,

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Britannia Expirans.

TO the End there should be a Commerce amongst Men, it hath pleas'd God to invite, as it were, one Country to Traffick with another, by the Variety of Things which the one hath, and the other hath not, which the Winds and Sea proclaim; and this *Seneca* thought to be a principle Benefit of Nature, that there should be a necessity of Commerce amongst Men.

IN what a miserable condition were the *Netherlanders*, if they receiv'd not a Supply from other Nations; they have nothing of their own, and yet they abound in all things by the Supply and Revenue they receive from other Nations.

*Quod & veno
gentis locis dis-
spatas miscuit
& sua omnia in
regiones ita
descripsit, ut ne-
cessarium mor-
talibus esset in-
ter ipsos co-
mercium.*

IF any Kingdom under the Sun can subsist of it self, none has more reason to bless God than this Island of ours, which is richly adorned with variety of all things necessary for Mans Life and Welfare, as Corn, Cattle, Fish, Fowl, Sider, Wool, Cloth, Leather, Tin, Lead, Iron, Hops, Timber, Flax, &c. whereby we have not only sufficient for our Maintenance, but do abundantly supply the Wants of other Nations, in a wonderful Variety of our Woollen Manufactures, Tin, Lead, Leather, &c. and no one Commodity that can be named which we are under an absolute Necessity of.

YET notwithstanding so many excellent and valuable Enjoyments, there is so great a power in the Management and Contrivance of Commerce, that no Nation hath ever

been under greater Declensions in Trade, at several period^s of time than ours ; which by a Brief Survey of former Times, as well as by a due Consideration of our present, seems to have been evidently occasion'd *By a too great consumption of Foreign Commodities purchast with our Treasure ; And by a too great Indulgence of Foreign Merchants.*

Edward III. laid the Foundation of our Riches, by the Establishment of our Woollen Manufactures in *England* ; to the carrying on of which Noble Design of his, he strictly in-joyn'd the Wear of our Woollen Manufactures, by several Ranks and Degrees of People by Sumptuary Laws : He took exact care that Merchants Aliens, who sold any Commodities in *England*, should invest the Money upon the Growth of this Kingdom ; And by his wise Conduct in these Affairs, he made a considerable Advance in the Riches and Glory of *England* in a few Years.

Richard II. by the Neglect of his Grand-Fathers Rules lost ground as fast, which made a great un-easiness amongst the *Kentish* Men (in which Parts the Cloth-Trade was first established) even to a Rebellion. He made *England* a Free Port, and gave a general Invitation by Act of Parliament, to all Merchants Strangers to come with their Goods and Families, and Trade Freely in all Parts of his Dominions, as well within Franchises as without, by Gross or Retail, to be under his safe Protection, and depart into their own Countries as freely again : And if any Corporation gave them any disturbance, they should Forfeit their Charter to the King ; which mounted, in effect, to a general Act of Naturalization ; and upon Payment of their Customs before-hand, he made them a considerable Abatement : He likewise gave them a liberty to Transport half their Money.

BUT Alas ! These mistaken Politicks in few Years drain'd the Treasure of this Kingdom to that low Ebb, that this Unfortunate Prince was denied a Loan of one Thousand Pounds
by

by the City of *London* and forc'd shamefully to resign the Government. He married the Lady *Anne* Daughter to the Emperor Charles the Fourth, who very much encouraged her Country-Men the *Bohemians* (to the discontent of the *English* Nobility) and as the Historian tells us, she brought in High-Head Attire, pick'd with Horns, and long-trained-Gowns for Women, a Melancholy Omen in those days; and if we have any Plot carrying on amongst us at this time, I perswade my Self it is in this perticular; this being the chiefest Seat of Treason at present. *Sampson* set the *Philistines* Corn-Fields on Fire with Foxes Tails, and if King *Richard* by this means was drove out of his Kingdom I can't tell but it may be a likely way to bring in— or no— Pride and Luxury seems to bid faire.

Henry IV. Who succeeded him, soon perceived the mischief which his Kingdom sustained by this indulgence to Foreign Merchants and in the Fourth Year of his Reign he oblig'd all Merchants Strangers to bestow their whole Money upon the Commodities of this Realm; upon forfeiture of any Gold, Silver or Plate which they should carry out, Excepting their reasonable cost. And in the next Year it was Enacted, that Merchant-Strangers shall be intreated and demeaned within this Realm in the manner form and condition as the Merchant-Denizens be or shall be intreated or demeaned in the Parts beyond the Sea, upon pain of forfeiture to the King the Goods and Chattels of such Merchant-Strangers. he likewise obliged Merchant-Aliens to put in Sureties that they would employ their Money upon Commodities of this Realm; and likewise appointed Officers to inspect their buyings and sellings and in the Year 1406. he granted a Charter to the Merchant-Adventurers of *England*.

Anno quarto
Hen. IV. cap. 15.

Anno quinto
Hen. 4. cap. 7.

cap. 2.

Henry V. In the Fourth Year of his Reign confirms the aforesaid Laws. And in the Eighth Year of his Reign he obliged every Merchant-Stranger to bring one ounce of Bullion of Gold to the Mint to be Coin'd for every Sack of Wool which he bought, and one ounce of Gold or the vallue, in Bullion

Anno quarto
Hen. V. cap. 5.

Anno octavo,
Hen. V. cap. 2.

Bullion of Silver for every three pieces of Tin upon forfeiture of the Wool and Tin.

Anno secundo
Hen. VI. c. 13. *Henry VI.* In the Second Year of his Reign strictly enjoin'd Merchant-Alliens to put in Sureties in the Chancery, every Company for them of their Company, that none of them should carry any Gold or Silver out of the Kingdom, and if any Proof could be made beyond the Sea upon any Merchant that went over, his Sureties was obliged to make it good in *England*. And whereas these Merchants-Alliens had obtained at this time a Credit with many of their Merchandizes whereby great losses fell upon the Manufacturers, it was Enacted, That no Credit should be given by any Manufactuerer to such Merchant-Alien upon forfeiture of his Goods. In the Eighteenth Year of this Reign a farther Expedient was us'd to prevent the Exportation of their Bullion, The Major, Bailif or Chief Officer of every City where any Merchant-Alien should repair was ordered to Assign to every such Merchant-Alien an Host or Surveyor, who was to survey all his Buyings and Sellings and Register them into a Book and certifie them into the Exchequer and to have Two Pence in the Pound for all his Merchandises bought and sold; but in this Act the Merchants of *Almaine* were Exempted which was a Company of Foreign Merchants Established in *England* by *Henry III.* belonging to the *Hans* Towns in *Flanders* and *Germany*, for some Extraordinary service they did in those days.

Decimo octavo
Hen. VI. cap. 4.

Anno tertio
Edw. IV. cap. 5. *Edward IV.* Took a more Effectual way to the cure of this evil after the Example of *Edward III.* by appointing what kind of Apparel Men and Women of every Vocation and Degree should wear, which took away the Temptation of Exporting our Coin and Bullion. He likewise Prohibited by Law the Importation of several wrought Manufactures, particularly wrought Silk. If any *Engliskman* or *Welch-man* shall bring in, or carry forth any Merchandize in Alien-Ships, if he may have Freight in a Denizen-Ship, he shall Forfeit his Merchandize, which was an excellent step to the safeguard of

Anno tertio,
cap. 3.

Anno tertio
cap. 1.

of the Kingdom at that time. And in this Law a Penalty was laid upon any Person that should wind up any Deceit in Wool. He likewise took exact Care that no Deceit should be used in making of Cloth, that the Work People should not be imposed upon, with extraordinary Weight, Paid with Commodities instead of Money. Anno quarto
Ed. 4. cap. 1.

HE made a Limitation in the Buying of Wool, in favour of the Manufactures. He confirm'd the Charter of the Merchant Adventurers of *England*, and call'd in Question the Charter of the Forreign Merchants of *Almaine*, or the *Still-yard*; which disgusted the Duke of *Burgundy*, so far, that he put out a Proclamation, for the Banishment of *English* Cloths out of his Dominion: Upon which a Law was made, that no Merchandizes of the Growth, or Workmanship, of any of the Countries subject to the Duke of *Burgundy*, shall be brought into this Realm, until he revoke the Proclamation, in which, he was forc'd to comply: And what Advance was made in this Kings Reign, from this just Foundation of Trade, and Prudent Management, I leave to the more Judicious to consider: He laid a strict Restraint upon Gamings; and in the Twenty Second Year of his Reign, he made a new Sumptuary Law about Apparel. Anno quarto
Ed. 4. cap. 5.

Anno decimo
sept. E. 4. cap. 3.

Richard III. who succeeded him, made many good Laws, in favour of his own natural born Subjects, in direct opposition to the incroachments of Aliens, in robbing them of their Injoyments, by the Importation of Forreign wrought Manufactures, and Settlement in *England* in our easy Handicraft Employments; leaving the most laborious, as going to Plow, or Cart, &c. to our own Subjects, as is Express in the said Law. The *Italian* Merchants were particularly Complain'd of at this time, as *Venetians*, *Florentines*, *Apulians*, *Cicilians*, *Lucaners*, &c. by which Law, no Alien could Exercise any Handicraft Trade, without being Servants to our *English* Subjects, or depart the Realm. Anno primo
Rich. 3. cap. 4.

Anno primo
Hen. 7. cap. 2. Henry VII. was more exact in this particular than any of his
 Predecessors: By the Second Law he made, he enjoind Aliens
 made *Denizens*, by Letters Pattents, or by Acts of Parliaments,
 to pay Aliens Duties; in the next place it was Enacted,
 that no Goods should be Enter'd, but in the Name of the
 true Owners of the Goods, upon Forfeiture of the Goods,
Tertio. Hen. 7.
cap. 7. Imprisonment, and to be Fined at the Kings Pleasure; a Law
 (respecting the true *English* Interest) which deserv'd to be wrote
 in Letters of Gold. He suffered no Cloth to be Transported,
cap. 11. until it was Barbed, Rowed and Shorne, and Confirm'd the
 Charter of the Merchant Adventurers of *England*. For the In-
Anno quarto
Hen. 7. cap. 10. couragement of our Navigation, it was Enacted, that no
 Person should Freight in a Strangers Ship, to be brought in-
Anno undecimo
Hen. 7. cap. 14. to this Realm or carried out, if he may have sufficient Freight
 in the same Port in a *Denizens* Ship: And after Ten Years
 Experience he renewed the Law, to oblige Aliens made *De-*
Anno secundo
Hen. 6. cap. 13. nizens, to pay the same Duties as if they were Aliens. Trade
 being thus Setled in the Reign of *Edward IV.* upon just and
 fair Grounds, and carried on with all strictness, in the just
 Right and Favour of our *English* Merchants, until the end of
 this Reign: It produc'd a strange alteration of Affairs; where-
 as *Richard II.* was denied a Loan of a Thousand Pounds,
 there was now left in the Treasury, One Million Eight Hun-
 der'd Thousand Pounds, which made of our Money above
 Three Millions; a Pound Troy of Silver being limited by
 Law, in the Second Year of *Henry VI.* not to be Sold above
 Thirty Shillings.

Decimo nono
Hen. 7. cap. 22. Henry VIII. took quite contrary measures; and which is
 very remarkable, Merchants Aliens became as much the Favo-
 rites of this Reign. At the death of *Henry VII.* a former Law
 which prohibited Men of *Chalice*, to be Factors for Merchants
 Aliens living in *England*, was repeal'd; as likewise all Laws,
 Ordinances, &c. made in derogation of the Merchants of the
Stilliard, in the First Year of this Reign. The Law made in
 the Third Year of *Henry VII.* which obliged all Persons, to
 Enter

enter their Goods in the true Proprietors Name, was likewise repeal'd. In the Fifth Year of this Reign, a Liberty was obtained to Transport any Cloth, without being fully Manufactur'd, under the value of *Five Marke*, which was a considerable Rate according to the value of their Coin; upon this pretence, that when they were brought beyond the Seas, and put into Colours, they must be new drest, barbed, shorne and rowed; so natural is it for Merchants of all Countries to Favour their own Subjects. In the Fourteenth Year of this Reign, Strangers Artificers were allowed to Exercise their Trades in *England*, contrary to the Law made in the Reign of *Richard III.* which occasioned so great Discontent in *England*, that a Decree made in the *Star Chamber* was put forth, to Prohibit all Strangers not made *Denizens*, to keep House or Shops: In the Thirty Second Year of this Reign, Aliens Duties was taken off, for a certain time, by the Kings Proclamation; which gave that Advantage to Merchants Aliens, that our *English* Merchandize was almost rooted out, and our *English* Navigation very much sunk. Forreign Merchants of the *Stilliard*, Shipt off at this time, above *Forty Thousand* Cloths a Year, and our *English* Merchants not *Four Thousand*; and most that was Exported and Imported, was in Forreign Botoms, which is *Verbatim* exprest in the Journals of *Edward VI.*

Anno prime
Hen. 8. cap. 2.

Anno quinto
Hen. 8. cap. 3.

21 Hen. VIII.

22 cap. 18.

Edward VI. (of Blessed Memory) us'd all Endeavour to retrieve what his Father lost, by Establishing Trade upon a just and honest Basis, in the right of his own Subjects; and in the Year 1552. the *English* Merchants being brought to this low Ebb in Trade, put in their complaint to the King and Council against these *Merchants Tutonicorum* (as they stil'd themselves) and they gave in their Answer to the said Complaint upon the Eighteenth Day of *January*, and upon the 25th their Answer was deliver'd to some Learned Council to peruse it; upon the Eighteenth day of *February* the Merchant-Adventurers put in their Replication to the said Answer; and upon the Twenty Third a Decree was

made by the Board, that upon Knowledge and Information of their Charters, they had found, *First*, That they were no sufficient Corporation; *Secondly*, That their Names, Numbers, and Notions were unknown: *Thirdly*, When *Edward* the Fourth did restore them to their Privileges, it was upon the condition that they should cover no Foreigners Goods, which they had done: For these Considerations, Sentence was given, That they had forfeited their Liberties, and were to be no more than Strangers. Upon the 28th Day came Ambassadors from *Hamburgh*, *Lubeck*, and the Regent of *Flanders*, to speak upon the behalf of these Merchants *Tutonicorum*. And upon the Second of *March* the Answer for the Ambassadors was committed to the Lord Chancellor, the two Secretaries Sir *Robert Bowes* and Sir *John Baker*, Judge *Mountague Griffith*, Solicitors *Gosnald*, *Goodrick*, and *Brooks*; it remained under Consideration until the First day of *May*, and then the Merchants *Tutonicorum* received their full Answer, confirming the former Judgment of the Council. This gave great Encouragement to *English* Men to come into the Company of Merchant-Adventurers. In *October* 3. following there met Three hundred Merchant-Adventurers of that Company, and lent *Edward* the Sixth Forty thousand Pounds to be paid in *Flanders*; and they Ship'd off at that time Forty thousand Cloths. Our Woollen Manufactures at this time were wonderfully debast, as appears by the Preamble of the Statute made in the same Year. Gold was paid at advance Prices at the same time; and I think there was never more effectual Means used in any Reign, to discourage the Profuseness which this Kingdom was led into, in the long Reign of *Henry* the Eighth. To prevent the Abuses and Disorders in Ale-Houses and Tippling-Houses, a Power was given by Law to the Justices of Peace, to Remove, Discharge, and put away common selling of Ale and Beer, as they shall think convenient; and none allowed without giving Bond and Surety against using unlawful Games, and for maintaining good Order and Rule.

Anno quinto
& sexto Edw. 6.
cap. 6.

cap. 19.

Anno quinto &
sexto Epw. 6.
cap. 25.

And

AND whereas at this time great numbers of Taverns were set up in back-Lanes, Corners, and suspicious Places within the City of *London*, which produced many Inconveniencies, much Evil Rule, and common resort of misrul'd Persons. The Price of *French* Wine was limited to Eight Pence a Gallon at the most.

Anno septimo
Edw. 6. cap. 5.

AND the number of Taverns reduced to Forty in the City of *London*, and no Persons to keep any Wine in their Houses under such Qualifications. These had been the most effectual means to discourage Profaneness and Imorality, so often recommended by His Majesty. *Sine cerere & Baccho friget Venus.*—And I think I may say we have had Forty new erected Taverns in the City of *London*, since our Reformation, made out of *English* Merchants Houses: A very commodious Accommodation to Merchant Aliens.

Queen *Mary* in the First Year of her Reign made a good step to regulate Persons in their Habits, according to their Professions and Employments. Whosoever shall wear Silk in or upon his Hat, Bonet, Girdle, Scabbard, Hose, Shooes, Spurleather, shall be three Months imprisoned, and forfeit 10*l.* except Mayors, Aldermen, &c. If any Person knowing his Servant to offend, do not put him out of his Service within Fourteen Days, or do retain him again, he shall forfeit 100*l.* This Counsel would never have consented to the vast Charge and Hazard of our Fleet in the *Straights*, to bring home this Commodity. There was an attempt made in this Reign by the Foreign Merchants of the *Stilliard* to regain their Liberties by the Favour of King *Philip*, but it proved ineffectual. In the Year 1557 we lost *Calais*, which of a long time had been the chief Mart of *English* Goods.

Anno primo
Ph. & Mar. c. 2.

Queen *Elizabeth* confirmed the Charter of the Merchant-Adventurers of *England* and added *Hambrough*, *East* and *West-Frizland* to their Charter and upon Stipulation with the Town of *Hambrough*, as large Priviledges are granted to the *English* Factory as they had in former Time at *Calais* a very

Anno primo
Eliz. cap. 11.

commodious Place to the Service of *Germany*. In the first Year of Her Reign she revived the Law made by *Henry* the Seventh, that no Person, Denizen nor Stranger, do take upon him to Enter or Do, or Cause to be Entred, any manner of Goods coming In or going Out, in the Name or Names of any other Person or Persons, than the very true Owner or Owners of the Goods, upon Forfeiture of the Goods; and at this time Aliens Duties were called the Antient Revenue of the Crown.

cap. 13.

In the next Place She made an effectual Law to preserve the Imployment of our Navigation, by obliging all Persons, that Ship'd any Goods upon Foreign Bottoms, to pay Aliens Duties: In this Law She limited the Merchant-Adventurers to two Shippings a Year and no more. In the Fifth Year of Her Reign a Law was made to prevent any Credit which should be given with Foreign Goods, appertaining to the Cloathing or Adorning of the Body, by rendring the Person that Sold them incapable to recover his Money. In the Thirteenth Year of Her Reign, She obliged every Person above the Age of Seven Years to wear upon the Sabbath-Day upon their Head a Cap of Wooll, Knit, Slick'd and Dressed in *England*, except Maids, Ladies, Gentlewomen, Noble Personages, and every Lord, Knight, and Gentleman of Twenty Mark Land, and their Heirs and such as have bore Office of Worship in any City, Borough, Town, Hamblet or Shire, and the Wardens of the Worshipful City of *London*. upon pain to Forfeit for every Days not wearing, Three Shillings and Four Pence: So careful was She to preserve the Employment of Her own Subjects.

Anno quinto
Eliz. cap. 6.

Decimo tertio
Eliz. cap. 19.

When each Woman in *England*, in King *Charles* the Second and King *James's* Reign, was a standing Revenue to the King of *France*, by his *Alamodes* and *Lustrings*; this was the last Sumptuary Law made in *England*, and what Figure *England* made in the World, and how firm this Queen stood in the true Interest of the Populacy, I need not multiply Words to relate.

King *James I.* in the First Year of his Reign, Repeals all sumptuary Rules, and let loose the Reins to Excess in Apparel and Wine, in Favour of *Scotland*; He likewise Repealed the Law against *Hawkers* and *Pedlers*, made in the Reign of *Edward* the Sixth, and gave Liberty to Transport our Wooll under the Custom of Thirty three Shillings Four Pence of every Merchant born Denizen for a Sack, which contain'd Eighteen Score; and Three Pound Six Shillings Eight Pence for every Merchant Stranger not born Denizen. And I think I need not spend time to shew how this Physick work'd by degrees amongst our *English* Subjects, but am well assured by one *Misselden* a Merchant, that wrote in the Year 1622 a little Tract upon the Decay of the Trade in *England*, That *Indian* Commodities was got into *England* as much in those Days as in ours, which he then urged as the chief Cause of the Scarcity of Money in *England* at that time. In the Seventh Year of this Reign we had an *English* Parliament sate, which gave a Subsidy to the King (out of all Goods and Merchandizes) of Two Shillings and Eight Pence in the Pound, to be paid by every Person born within this Realm of *England*; and Five Shillings and Four Pence by every Alien and Stranger born out of the King's Obeisance: Four Shillings in the Pound out of all Land in the Hands of all Persons born under the Kings Obeisance; and Eight Shillings in the Pound out of all Lands in the Hands of Aliens, Denizens or not Denizens, born out of the King's Obeysance. How far this distasted the Court at that time I can't tell, but no Parliament was called until Fourteen Years after. *Fælix quam faciunt, &c.*

Anno primo
Jac. I. cap. 25.

cap. 33.

Charles the First did nothing in Trade for the good of his Subjects.

Oliver Cromwell put out a Proclamation upon the Thirteenth Day of May 1655, to support the Merchant-Adventurers of *England* in their Trade, and particularly Established
a Staple

a Staple for *English* Goods at *Dordrecht* in *Holland*, which place was agreed upon between the Fellowship of the Merchant-Adventurers of *England*, and the Magistrates of that City; he strictly forbid any *English* Woollen-Manufactures to be carried to any other Parts of *Holland*; and at this time our *East-India* Trade was quite sunk. Lands in *England* was never higher than at this time; nor ever a more general Employment for our Poor; which brought much Riches in few Years into this Kingdom, and gave such satisfaction to our Artificers, that those times are still remembered with Veneration to this very day.

Charles the II. laid the Foundation of our Misfortunes in Trade, by the Settlement of the Book of Rates so much in favour of *France*, and our *East-India* Company; particularly upon the Article of Linnens, which is a Commodity of great Use in *England*, and our Plantations, and natural to be rais'd in *France*, *Flanders* and *Germany*; which three Places stand in Competition with this Commodity, and the least favour in Customs given to any one, must needs distance the other, *Flemish*, *Gentish*, *Isingam*, *Overisils*, *Rouse*, *Brabant*, *Embsen*, *Frieze-Cloth*, *Bag-Holland*, *Brown Holland*, all *Flanders* Linnens was charg'd at *three pence per Ell* Custom; Fine Broad Dowlas of *France*, the Piece containing one hundred and six Ells, was charged at *Five Shillings*, a little above one *half-penny per Ell*; and all other sorts of Linnen in like proportion; a piece of fine Lawns containing thirteen Ells of *Germany* Linens, was charged at *six Shillings* Custom, a piece of fine Mullin or Callico from the *East-Indies*, *six-pence per piece*. This impoverisht the Linen-Manufactures in *Flanders* and *Germany*, and as much advanc'd the *French*, which made way to the *French* Conquests in those Parts. As the Consumption of *Flanders* and *Germany* Linnens lessen'd in *England*, the consumption of our Woollen-Manufactures sunk in a like proportion in those Parts; which in the Year 1663, made the Woollen-Manufacturers Petition the Parliament against the Merchant-Adventurers having large
Stocks

Stocks of Cloth upon their hands which they could not Sell ; the Parliament at that time Addresseth the King to make a Trial of a Free-Trade, which was then seconded by some other *English* Merchants who were not Free of that Company, who prevail'd, and with strained, false Cloth made some advantage to themselves in *Flanders* and *Holland* at the first time ; but this Gap being open'd to the *Hollanders*, the *English* Interlopers were totally rooted out by the *Dutch* and other Nations, and Agents for them settled in *England*, which is well in Memory : Wooll sunk from twenty five shillings per Todd to fourteen, and the other produce of Land in like proportion ; and this un-easiness gain'd another Advantage to the *French* and *Dutch* ; In the twenty fifth Year of King *Charles II.* a Law was procured to take off Aliens-Duties, which was the Fatal Stroke to our *English* Merchandize and Navigation, which by this Means was preserved from the Reign of Queen *Elizabeth*. It is well remembered how all *French* Commodities were encourag'd in *England*, Linnen, Clarets, Brandy, Silks, Gauzes, nay, Druggetts made of our own Wooll, &c. The *French* could now turn their Clarets and Brandy into Perpetuana's and *Colchester* Bays, and send them to *Spain* upon as good Terms as any *English*-man, and have Home Pieces of Eight in Return, and *Spanish* Wooll in a settled Course of Trade, which the King of *France* improved to the very utmost, and upon a Modest Computation, above a quarter part of the Wooll of this Kingdom was carried into *France*.

James the II. did nothing relating to Trade in his Reign ; His Martial Genius led him to the execution of that which was prepar'd in the last. And upon this foot we stood at the Revolution, at which time we could not reasonably promise our selves any safety without lessening the power of *France*, who, by the enjoyment of these advantages in Trade ever since the beginning of the Reign of King *Charles* the Second, was come to a prodigious heighth. The stop of our Wooll, the Improvement of our Manufacture ; *English*
Mer-

Merchandize and Navigation, the natural supply of our Treasure to a thinking Politician, might have been a good help to the attainment of this End; but nothing alas! of this could be done without touching the Interest of *Holland*; and in the heat of these Affairs, the Vogue of a *free Trade*, a *free Trade*! Lil-ly Bullero, a *free Trade*—so much prevailed, that instead of making up our Mounds which were pull'd down in K.*Charles II's* Reign, like the inconsiderate *Trojans*, we pull'd down our Walls to let them in, and usher'd in a Clause by way of Rider, in a pretended Bill to prevent the Exportation of Wooll to the Destruction of our Factories abroad; the Father destroy'd his own Son, and all opposition to this Interest in Trade, has hitherto prov'd ineffectual. A numerous Petition the very next Year to prevent the Transportation of Wooll by taking off the Felony, and to redress some Grievances in Trade, from a County then declining in Trade, but since miserable, was presented to the Parliament, and a Bill was order'd in upon the Prayer of the Petition, which being fram'd to the disadvantage of this Interest, was the First Year baffled; a second attempt made; a third, a fourth, it still lay upon the Table, like the Lame Man at the Pool of *Bethesda*; and when any Motion was made to bring it to a Hearing, some more important Affair always stept in— A Bill for the *Royal Lustring Company*— To Naturalize *Solomon Amey*, a *Frenchman* (who has since cheated our Clothiers of a considerable Sum, and wrote them from *Holland*, if they will not take Ten Shillings in the Pound he will pay none) to cut of an Entail—to cut a River—

O quanto plausu! quibus hæc complectimur ulnis!

and, which was very remarkable, that Member which was most zealous for this foreign Interest, seldom mist Preferment, Sr— S— Sr— T.— Mr. C.— or any other that the Coat will fit. If the Disappointments in the Funds prolong'd the War two Years, had good Care been taken in this particular,

lar, I am satisfied the War had ended four Years sooner. Our Poor cost Seven Hundred Thousand Pound in Charity *per Annum*, the *French* earn'd as much out of our Wooll.

How often was the Consideration of Trade recommended by His Majesties Most Gracious Speech, which part of it was like the Rabbins *Greek*--- *Non potest legi*. Our Saviour, in a Parable, tells us of a Man that had two Sons, and he came to the one and said, go work in *my* Vinyard, and he answer'd, (upon what scruple I can't tell) *I will not, but afterwards* upon due consideration, *repented and went*; he said likewise to the other, and before the Words were out of his Mouth, he seems to Answer, *I go Sir--- but never went*. I think I may fairly borrow the Words of *Juvinal*, and assert them in a great deal of Truth at this time, with a little Variation: *Et spes & ratio bonorum in Cesare tantum: Solus enim artifices hac tempestate Egenos respexit*--- Sat. 7. And true Love of this kind always begat Love in *England*, which to Queen *Elizabeth* was a better security than a Standing Army. 'War, 'we are told is now become a Trade, and Management the 'Principle Art of War; and such Qualifications needful to 'our Souldiery, as for Men set apart to the Gospel. I can't but disagree with these Qualifications from our late Experience, when the Army began to Preach as well as Fight, we had soon no King. It must be confest, that the Power of *France* was so great, that it made up a full Apprentiship in War to bring this Potent Prince within his due Bounds, and no Prince but ours, could ever have turn'd the Tide of his Ambition. Notwithstanding which it doth not follow, that Souldiery shall be a standing Trade in *England*, because it was never thought to be our Natural Strength; and if it be allowed, That *France* came to this extraordinary Greatness by the advantages which he enjoyed by the Manufacture of our Wooll, the large consumption of his *Linnens, Alamodes, Claret, Brandy, Paper, &c.* in *England*, the whole Reign of King *Charles* the Second, and King *James*; and upon the other hand, that *England, Germany* and *Flanders* have been impoverisht by a lessening the consumption of our Woollen

Manufactures, and the Linnens of *Flanders* and *Germany*, it doth follow, that this Greatness of *France* was purely accidental (Money being the Sinews of War) and if so, Land-Forces in *England* are to be esteemed no more than accidental, and safely to be laid aside when these extraordinary supplies of the *French* Treasure are intercepted, which is now in our power to do, 'But *France* is at this time too strong a Match in *Flanders* for any single Nation in *Europe*, not excepting *England*. Which may be allowed, yet I doubt not, but *Spain*, the Emperor and *Holland* are able to ballance his Greatness, the Emperor being disengaged in his War with the *Turks*, and the *Dutch* having obtained a Revenue out of *England* since the War which would hugely augment their Forces if need require. Our Souldiers being disbanded, will fall into Employments, which will increase our Treasure; many may come into our *Militia*, and thereby not only preserve their Exercise, but encourage others; and if any thing extraordinary should happen, a small Reward would gain many of them again; and an Army kept in *England* with our Beef, &c. but few Years, I am of Opinion, would shrink at first time at the Hardships abroad, as new-raisd-Men has done; and supposing the Duke of *Monmouth* had been a *Frenchman*, and our Western Manufacturers flusht in Employment, they had soon made Dice of his Bones; this Gentleman, by his fondness of Alliances and Confederacies abroad, seem'd to be taken with the Vanity of the Stag, who fell in love with his Horns, and despised his Legs. And this brings me to the Proof of my Assertion.

And in the First Place I will consider our Coin, the artificial Matter of Commerce, which is said to be the Sinews of War and of State, and I very much doubt in this Point we are *Expiring*; a Common-Wealth is like unto a Private Family, where if the Expence is greater than the Revenue, he must needs come behind-hand, which seems to be our Case at present, the *quantum* of our Coined Silver out of our Clipp-Money and Plate, I think was about Five or Six Millions, a
very

very scanty allowance to carry on the Commerce of this Kingdom, and if that Tale was to be made good at this time, I would not be the Security for one Million--- Upon the consideration first of the Price of Bullion, ever since the Coinage has been over, which has been from five shillings seven pence half-penny *per ounce*, to five Shillings three Pence, rising and falling, at this time about five shillings six pence, and as the *Exchange* to *Cales* now rules, there is no likelihood of any alteration. The Arrival of the Galeons nor Flota has turn'd the Tyde. The late Act of Parliament for consolidating our Gold and Silver-Lace has had a very good effect in the increase of thar Wear in Occular Demonstration. The Exportation of our Bullion to the *East-Indies* bears an equal proportion to our consumption of Muzlins and *Indian* Commodities, which is so great, that we are forced to ransack all *Christendom* for Silver, which lately disturbed our rich Neighbours (who are the Pattern of a Free-Trade) fearing that we were about to shake the Bank of *Amsterdam*, tho not half a ballance to what was Shipped hence to *Holland*, in the prime time of our Clipping, as the Bills of Entry will demonstrate. When we have been so lately in the Sudds by a general Clipping and Exchanging of Broad Money, to expect so sudden an alteration, that twenty eight pound of Silver in Coin shall be paid away to purchase twenty five pounds and an half of the same Commodity is too great a presumption, I doubt, whilst the Refining-Pot knows no distinction. Doctor *Lock*, in his Position, *That an equal quantity of Silver is always of equal value to an equal quantity of Silver*, I think was scarce Orthodox on either side. We may with less difficulty be slipt out of our Silver Coin than we had to procure it, and the difficulty of former times will I hope, put us upon Consideration in this matter in due time. The Banishment of all Cotton-Linens out of *Enrope* was once propos'd at a Treaty of *Nimeguen*, which would be an excellent Expedient at this time, to increase the Treasure of *Christendom*, to strengthen our Alliance by a profitable Commerce in our Woollen Manufactures, and the Flaxen Linens of *Flanders*, *Germany*

and *Holland*, which will be the best Guard against *France*; establish a more solid Foundation for Charity, and make our Habits more agreeable to our Profession. Had *Dorcas's* Garments been made of Muslin, her Name had hardly been memoriz'd by the Tears of the Poor. *Solomon* compares a
Prov. 31. v. 14. Vertuous Woman to the Merchants Ships, and I think, no Women were ever so exact to the Letter of the Simile as ours in Flag and Sail, extended in levity *a prora puppique*, and if they do not so fully answer the end of the Simile, as might be wisht, in bringing home our Treasure, as is seemingly intimated by the Wooll, Flax, Spindle and Distaff, I am sure they contribute very much by their Musling-Sails, to the carrying of it out; had *Solomon* lived in our days, all his Wisdom had fail'd him in distinguishing the Harlot by her Attire. And since these *Indian* Commodities has made so little difference between *Abigail* and my Lady in Habits, the Master too often took one instead of the other; which may have occasion'd a greater inconveniency than we are well aware of, in preventing the due reproofs of this extravagancy, thro' fear of a closer application at Home. Lectures against Pride were Jewels by their rarity in our late Reigns, and hereby this Monster Pride has made her own Intrenchment.

The next Point to be considered is our Merchandize, in which we are evidently *expiring*. Eight Parts in Ten of the Native Commodities of this Kingdom which are Transported, I am well assured are bought in *England* by Foreign Merchants, and our *English* Factories abroad sunk in a like proportion, and a very great share of the profit of our easie, Retail Trades in *England*, is getting into the hands of Aliens of a lower degree. Nay, we have Wooll-brogging *Jews*. It was said in the Reign of *Edward* the Sixth, that their Names, Numbers and Nations were unknown, and into what a *Babel* are we got into, an *English-man* may soon lose his own Language upon the East part of our *Exchange*. I can't but wish the Wind may vary from that Point, that we may carry our Merchandize out, and they tarry at home. The
reason

reason which was urged in *Henry* the Seventh's Reign, was, that when Foreigners had got Estates in *England*, they carried them into their own Countries, which is very natural, as our Merchants brought their Estates home; but here is the odds, there is a Seminary of Merchants still growing in *England* out of the younger Sons of our Gentry, who have always Fortunes given them by their Friends, when most of these Foreigners come very light into *England*, wholly depending upon Commissions, which is now drove very low, and if they take to drink high, instead of carying an Estate home, in a fair way, they many times make their Fortunes by the loss of our Manufacturers; get an Estate over and never pay— as Trade is now settled, in Advices twice a Week, how all Commodities govern, a *Dutch* or *German* Merchant can manage a Stock in *England* by an Agent of his lodging in a *Garet* at a *Packer's* House; or by some *Englishman* for one *per Cent.* Commission, whilst his Stock is secure from any Taxes—and the whole benefit and influence thereof accrews to his own Countrymen. No Man fixt in a good way of living in his Native Country, will be willing to leave it, and if we must make them fat here, I can't but think our own Subjects (by a preservation of their Rights) will thrive best in our own Pastures. How much *per Cent.* the profit of our Merchandize may be allowed to be, or what Concern it is for us to secure this Employment for the younger Sons of our Gentry, I shall not determine; only consider briefly the attendant inconveniencies of this alteration to the Publick.

I. THE Government of Trade is hereby taken out of our hands, which gives double advantage to the Alien in buying of our Goods, and selling of his own; as likewise, in some measure the Government of the *Exchange*. No Person now living, can remember the like loss that our Nation lately sustained in this particular; twenty five *per Cent.* advantage in Remittance of Money to buy Tallies at Five and Forty *per Cent.* and receive Eight *per Cent.* Interest, which Money is now spent in *Holland*, a hard Article upon us, that so great

great a part of the Revenue of our Kingdom is spent abroad. *Madder* is sold above double the usual Price, Spiceries a third part advance, &c.

II. Since this *Alteration* vast quantities of our Wooll has been Transported, our Manufactures much debas'd, carry'd off without being fully manufactur'd, and many Goods smuggled to the loss of the King's Custom.

III. THE strength of our Nation, in case of a War is hereby much lessen'd. Supposing a War with *Holland*, and the *Exeter* Serge-Makers wholly depending upon *Dutch* Merchants; they could not subsist long, when many instances may be brought in the like Case, when the Merchant-Adventurers of *England* took off vast quantities of Goods and laid them up to the out-side of their Stocks, and being Men of Interest borrowed much more for the same purpose, and the Service they did this Kingdom *Anno* 88, is worthy to be remembred to their honour; when they supply'd the Navy-Royal with a whole Ships lading of Powder and Shot from *Hamburgh*, which came luckily, even in *articulo temporis*, when there was a great want thereof; and far greater quantities of Cloth has been Ship'd off by this Company than ever was in a loose, disorderly Trade, and larger *Englisk* Ships employed, which would be of Service in a War.

IV. Hereby the sharpest People of all Countries are let in upon us. After our Coin was par'd to the quick, it was admirable to hear the Logical Discourses of our *Coffee-Houses* upon the intrinsick value of a Guinea, which by the strength of Reason was brought up to Thirty Shillings, directly contrary to a Law made in the Reign of *Edward* the Sixth; being settled a little time at this value, and considerable Payments made to our Woollen-Manufacturers for large quantities of Goods bought at little or no Advance; the Summer Crop of Wooll bought up, some for *Holland*, and another part by our Wooll-boggers; about *Michaelmas* the danger of the Fall of Guineas begin to appear; those that had Wooll remaining upon hand, would not sell but at a proportionable advance, the *Jobbers* held theirs at a like Rate, the Manufacturer is brought upon the Rack, to take the Wooll at this Price, or his Work-People starve; as soon as this is

done, and Goods came to Market early in the Spring, the Tyde turn'd, all was at Stake if the Price of Guineas was not brought down; the Manufacturers that had the dear Goods upon hand, petition'd the Parliament to ward the Blow, but ineffectual; the Guineas made a trip to *Holland*, which made a stop in Trade; the Clothier sold that Cloth, which he could not afford under 15 *l.* at 10 *l.* some at 9 *l.*

The last thing I shall mention to prove my Assertion is our *Navigation*, in which particular we are come to a lower Ebb if possible; not one Ship in 40 employ'd in our Merchandize to *Holland*, *Flanders* and *Breme*, and very few to *Hambro* and the *East-Country*, to which parts two thirds of the *Native Commodities* of this Kingdom are Exported, and a greater share of our Plantation-Goods; a very great increase of Shipping at *Breme*, where every Ship which they have advanc'd, have sunk the Employment of a Ship in *England*. Most Merchants are concern'd in Shipping, and its natural to imploy their own Country-men; how much the strength of our Nation is lessned in this particular, I leave to the more judicious; the imployment of as many Seamen as would Man a Fleet for our Security, is hereby lost, who are always within the compass of a Post-Letter twice a Week, our own Seamen are hereby become Strangers in our home Seas, which would be of as good service, and as much to be depended upon as if kept in the King's Pay, which Proposal I take to be the same with that of building Work-Houses for the Employment of our Poor, whilst at the same time the *Dutch* and *French* get a quarter-part of our *Wooll*.

Nothing in the eye of reason) but an effectual stop to our *Pride* and *Luxury*, in a Forein Consumption (as well upon a *Politick* as a *Religious* account) can secure this Kingdom from ruine. The *Dutch* and Forein Nations are actually in the possession (in *Merchandize* and *Navigation*) of the profitable part of our *Commerce* in respect to the Publick. The Stock remaining in *English* hands — is chiefly imploy'd in bringing home Materials to maintain this *Pride* and *Luxury* — and in ingrossing all sorts of Materials to the greater Oppression of our Poor, which Stock being stopt upon one hand, will naturally fall into the other, by the Support and Enlargement of our *Hambro*, *East-Country* and *Russia* Companies, under due Regulations. And our *Misery* or *Welfare* resolving it self by the actions of *this great Council*, I hope all true *Englishmen* will join in hearty Prayers for a Blessing upon Your Undertakings, That no more of our *English* Subjects may starve in our Streets



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